

INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING PERIODONTAL SURGERY

MEDICATIONS AND DISCOMFORT: Pain following periodontal surgery is usually well controlled with non-narcotic medications such as ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, Nuprin) or Tylenol. If ibuprofen has been prescribed for pain, continue taking this medication every 4-6 hours for several days, even if you are in little discomfort. Narcotic medications (such as Mepergan, Demerol or Codeine) may be additionally beneficial for pain control. You may elect to take the prescribed narcotic (with, not in place of, your ibuprofen or Tylenol) for pain that is moderate to severe. Narcotic medications may cause drowsiness and /or nausea. To minimize stomach upset, take your medication with at least ½ a glass of water.

IF SURGERY INVOLVED A TISSUE GRAFT: Please do not disturb it by pulling out your lip to look in your mouth. The tissue graft can be dislodged from the tooth by excess movement of your lips. Please also avoid contact sports for the next week, or physical exertion during the next 3 days.

ACTIVITY: You generally can resume normal activities the day following periodontal surgery. It is recommended, however, that you limit your activities and return home to rest the day of your surgery. This is especially true if you have taken sedative medications.

APPLICATION OF COLD: You may experience facial swelling during the first several days following surgery. During the first 24 hours, the application of ice can help control swelling. Apply an ice pack to your face for 10-15 minute intervals, approximately six times during the first 24 hours. After 24 hours, warm compresses or warm salt water rinses may be more beneficial than cold.

SURGICAL DRESSING: A surgical dressing may have been placed over your gums. Do not worry if the dressing falls off before your next appointment. This should not adversely affect your healing. If you are concerned, feel free to call the office.

NUTRITION: A good diet is important for healing. A semi-soft high protein diet is recommended. Avoid hot and spicy, or hard and crunchy foods since they may injure healing tissues. Food suggestions include scrambled eggs, yogurt, bananas, instant breakfast drinks, apple sauce, cottage cheese, oat meal, cream of wheat, etc. (Very cold foods or drinks such as ice cream or milk shakes, sometimes also cause discomfort to your teeth and should be eaten cautiously.)

BRUSHING AND RINSING: It will be difficult to clean your teeth, immediately following surgery. An antiseptic mouth rinse, such as Peridex, may be recommended to help control bacterial plaque. Use the mouth rinse as directed. Brush any teeth which have not been treated surgically, as usual. Package inserts that come with the mouth rinse warn of tooth staining or increased tartar formation. Do not let these precautions prevent you from using this product. These side effects do not occur until after prolonged use and can be remedied by having your teeth cleaned, should they occur.

SMOKING: Smoking will delay your healing. If you smoke, please try to cut back for the first week following surgery. This may be a good time for you to quit smoking.

BLEEDING: For several hours following surgery, a small amount of blood may appear in your saliva. If bleeding persists, try to localize the area where the bleeding is coming from. Apply firm but gentle pressure directly to the site of bleeding, with gauze or moistened tea bag for 5 to 10 minutes. If bleeding continues, please call the office.

POST-SURGICAL PROBLEMS: If you experience swelling that increases after 3 days, fever, discomfort that is not controlled by the prescribed medications, an adverse reaction to any medications, or if you are uncertain about your progress in healing, please call the office.
